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DE RUEHEK #0925 1981309

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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9952

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 2230

RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI IMMEDIATE 0117

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0666

RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 2635

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 2014

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP IMMEDIATE

RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BISHKEK 000925

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN, NEA/IR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL IR KG

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ REBUFF IRAN OVER SCO SUMMIT

REF: BISHKEK 908

Classified By: Charge Lee Litzenberger; Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Sarbayev requested an urgent meeting with Charge July 17, to provide a readout of his just completed trip to Tehran in advance of the August 16 SCO summit in Bishkek, which Iranian President Ahmadinejad will attend as an SCO observer. He opened by saying he wanted to "set the record straight" and "reassure Washington" in light of recent Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reports alleging that Sarbayev had said that Kyrgyzstan supports Iranian membership in SCO, and that U.S. "meddling" in the region had only increased the threat of terrorism and drug trafficking. Sarbayev said the IRNA reports were "pure fantasy" and he had just called in the Iranian Ambassador to complain about them, and to ask the Iranian to report Sarbayev's displeasure to Tehran over the "baseless and irresponsible" way that IRNA reported his remarks. He said he told the Iranian Ambassador that he went to Tehran to discuss issues, but the way IRNA fabricated Sarbayev's words raised the question of whether such visits are of value. He told Charge, "Tell Washington that Kyrgyzstan's position has not changed." With a smile he added, "We remain part of the international effort in Afghanistan; we are part of the "western meddling" that IRNA referred to."

¶2. (C) Sarbayev recalled that the primary purpose of his trip was to convey to the Iranians that the Kyrgyz did not want Ahmadinejad to use the Bishkek summit as a platform to make outrageous statements. Sarbayev indicated he couched the message more diplomatically, and told FM Mottaki that Bishkek hoped the SCO summit would be "constructive," and that there was no place for grandstanding. Mottaki did not respond. Sarbayev said he was surprised when Mottaki asked him to confirm that Bishkek would support Iran's membership in SCO at the summit. Sarbayev said he replied calmly that, no, such a decision would require consultation with all SCO members. Sarbayev told Charge that Iranian membership has not come up in recent preparatory meetings of ministers. Furthermore, he said SCO has "no precedent and no mechanism"

to add members. The SCO was set up when Uzbekistan joined the Shanghai Five; i.e. a new organization was created because of the addition. He reiterated to the Charge that no membership decisions will be taken at the Bishkek summit.

¶3. (C) Sarbayev said the Iranians pressed for a response to their earlier request for President Ahmadinejad to make an official visit to Kyrgyzstan following the SCO summit; Sarbayev informed FM Mottaki that this would not be possible, due to the complexity of events surrounding the summit. Mottaki then asked if he (Mottaki) could make a pre-summit visit on July 25; Sarbayev also rebuffed this request. Even on bilateral trade and economic issues, Sarbayev expressed some frustration. He said that the Iranians for years have been talking about making large investments in Kyrgyzstan, but every time the Kyrgyz talk to the Iranians, they get a different story. Sarbayev said he asked the Iranians to please clearly lay out the specific conditions under which they propose to invest.

¶4. (C) Sarbayev commented that IAEA experts were in Tehran during his visit. He said he hoped that this would mean good news would be forthcoming, then hesitated and added, "but I doubt it." He said that there were long lines at gas stations, and cars were limited to 3 liters of gasoline per day. This was generating widespread complaints, as Tehran is a sprawling city, and 3 liters per car was insufficient for most families.

LITZENBERGER